

Testimony
Concerning Commission on Aging
Appropriations Committee

March 1, 2011

By

Quincy Abbot

Good Afternoon. I am Quincy Abbot of West Hartford. For over 40 years I have been an advocate for people with disabilities, especially those like my daughter with an intellectual disability.

You may wonder why I oppose the Governor's proposal to reduce funding for the Commission on Aging.

- Now that I am almost 80 years old, Connecticut's programs for those who are aging seem a more immediate concern than they used to! But you don't have to be over 65 to share this concern. You have parents and grandparents and friends today who fit the category or maybe you do yourself. In any event, you too will someday be of an age to benefit from programs for the aging.
- The Commission on Aging does not provide direct services. Rather it is a public policy agency. With today's budget pressures, we need objective information more than ever to inform policymakers and help protect the vulnerable, such as those who are aging, and to help all lead more fulfilling lives.
- The U. S. Supreme Court's Olmstead decision in 1998 recognized that the interests of people with disabilities were the same, no matter what their age. Since that time Connecticut's Long Term Care Plan, prepared at the direction of the Legislature, was expanded to cover people with disabilities of all ages. The Commission on Aging has been a driving force in the preparation and implementation of that Plan. Younger people with disabilities, as well as those who are elderly, have benefited from this joining of interests.

My conclusion is that a dismantling of the Commission on Aging now would be disastrous to the quality of life for many Connecticut citizens who are aging or disabled.